

# EXHIBIT A

Redline Showing Changes to ECF No. 46  
Defendants' [Corrected] Reply in Support of  
Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment

**REDACTED SHOWING CHANGES TO ECF NO. 46**

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9

10 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
11 NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA  
12 OAKLAND DIVISION

13 AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION, ) Case No. 4:23-cv-3450-DMR  
14 Plaintiff, )  
15 v. ) DEFENDANTS' [CORRECTED] REPLY IN  
16 ) SUPPORT OF CROSS-MOTION FOR  
17 UNITED STATES IMMIGRATION AND ) SUMMARY JUDGMENT  
18 CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT and UNITED )  
19 STATES DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND ) Date: May 2, 2024  
SECURITY, ) Time: 1:00 p.m.  
20 Defendants. ) Place: Zoom Videoconference  
21 ) Hon. Donna M. Ryu  
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**ECF No. 46**

28 DEFS.' [CORRECTED] REPLY IN SUPPORT OF CROSS-MSJ  
4:23-CV-3450 DMR

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2 Almost fifty years ago, the Ninth Circuit affirmed the rejection of a FOIA requester's attempt to  
3 obtain an electronic database of library reference materials from the government for free, holding that  
4 the materials did not constitute agency records. *SDC Development v. Mathews*, 542 F.2d 1116 (9th Cir.  
5 1976). In the years since, courts including this one have consistently rejected FOIA requests for  
6 electronic library materials, including requests just like the one here seeking legal reference materials  
7 the government acquired from well-known providers of such information. *Baizer v. U.S. Dep't of Air*  
8 *Force*, 887 F. Supp. 225 (N.D. Cal. 1995); *Tax Analysts v. United States Dep't of Justice*, 913 F. Supp.  
9 599 (D.D.C. 1996) (*Tax Analysts II*).

10 Plaintiff<sup>1</sup> remains unable to identify any contrary authority, and thus in its opposition attempts to  
11 distinguish the uniform precedent based on immaterial or unsupported facts and, failing that, asks the  
12 Court to create a legal exception just for this case. Plaintiff's arguments are unpersuasive. Its attempt to  
13 dispute the uncontradicted evidence that the Master Agreement applies is meritless, as the agency  
14 declarations and the documents themselves confirm. Similarly, Plaintiff's attempts to spin the relevant  
15 control factors—all of which support finding that the Offline Lexis Materials are not agency records—  
16 lack evidentiary support. And Plaintiff's suggestion that the Court should disregard the longstanding  
17 control-based analysis and carve out an exception for cases involving electronic library materials related  
18 to the agency's fulfillment of a “constitutional obligation” was rejected by the Ninth Circuit in *SDC*  
19 *Development*.

20 Although the Court need not proceed beyond finding that the Offline Lexis Materials are not an  
21 agency record, they are in any event protected by Exemption 4. Plaintiff's challenges on that front are  
22 equally flawed. Exemption 4 protects copyrighted and trade secret information the government obtains  
23 from a third party, and the requisite degree of confidentiality can be maintained, as it is here, by  
24 provision of the information under a limited license, which assures the information provider that the

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26 <sup>1</sup> Capitalized terms not defined herein are given the meaning accorded to them in Defendants'  
27 Cross-Motion for Summary Judgment, ECF No. 40 (“Defs.' X-MSJ”).  
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1 government will abide by its stated restrictions. Plaintiff's argument amounts to an assertion that this is  
2 simply not possible, and that providing the information to detained noncitizens in ICE custody under the  
3 terms of a limited license is tantamount to unfettered public disclosure. Neither the evidence nor the  
4 applicable law supports such a result. Accordingly, the Court should reject Plaintiff's arguments and  
5 hold that the Offline Lexis Materials are not agency records and, in the alternative, were properly  
6 withheld under Exemption 4.

7 **II. ARGUMENT**

8 **A. Plaintiff Offers No Independent Evidence in Support of Its Motion or Opposition,  
9 Leaving Defendants' Evidence Undisputed**

10 As an initial matter, the record in this case consists entirely of the evidence submitted by  
11 Defendants in support of their cross-motion, which included the Declaration of Jessica Jones (attaching  
12 the contract between ICE and RELX, Dkt. No. 41) and the Declaration of Shawn O'Donnell (attaching  
13 the Master Agreement, Dkt. No. 42). Plaintiff's opposition is accompanied by no evidence, and its  
14 initial motion included only a declaration from counsel attaching the ICE-RELX contract and an email  
15 exchange between counsel. Accordingly, from an evidentiary perspective, Defendants' showing stands  
16 uncontradicted. "To successfully challenge an agency's showing that it complied with the FOIA, the  
17 plaintiff must come forward with 'specific facts' demonstrating that there is a genuine issue with respect  
18 to whether the agency has improperly withheld extant agency records." *Span v. U.S. Dep't of Justice*,  
19 696 F. Supp. 2d 113, 119 (D.D.C. 2010) (quoting *U.S. Dep't of Justice v. Tax Analysts*, 492 U.S. 136,  
20 142 (1989)). While Plaintiff's opposition advances a number of counterfactual arguments—*see, e.g.*,  
21 Opp. at 14 (arguing that "the requested records are well-integrated into ICE's systems and files")—it  
22 provides no evidence to support any of them. "A trial court can only consider admissible evidence in  
23 ruling on a motion for summary judgment." *Orr v. Bank of Am., NT & SA*, 285 F.3d 764, 773 (9th Cir.  
24 2002). Accordingly, the Court should disregard Plaintiff's factual assertions that are unsupported by  
25 admissible evidence.

26 **B. The Master Agreement Applies to ICE's Use of the Offline Lexis Materials**

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1 Plaintiff attempts to dispute that the Master Agreement applies, despite having no contrary  
2 evidence of any kind, recognizing that the provisions of the Master Agreement doom its arguments on  
3 both the “agency record” and Exemption 4 issues. The O’Donnell Declaration states, however, that  
4 “ICE’s use of the Offline Lexis Materials is subject to the terms of the LexisNexis Master Agreement,”  
5 and explains that “[b]y purchasing a subscription to the LexisNexis Research Service pursuant to the  
6 contract [between ICE and RELX], ICE is a party to the Master Agreement.” O’Donnell Decl. ¶ 5. ICE  
7 validly contracted with RELX for the subscription to the LexisNexis Research Service, and the Master  
8 Agreement, which sets forth the terms of use for that service, accompanies that agreement. *See*  
9 O’Donnell Decl., Ex. A at p.10 (defining “Agreement” to mean the “Master Agreement together with  
10 the “Order Form.”). Specifically, the Master Agreement provides that “Your use of a Legal Research  
11 Service is subject to this Master Agreement.” O’Donnell Decl., Ex. A at p.1. The Master Agreement  
12 defines “you or your” to mean “the person or entity indicated on the signature page of the Order Form,  
13 the person or entity on whose behalf a click-through version of this Master Agreement is accepted, or  
14 any other person or entity that accesses or uses the Legal Research Service.” *Id.* at p. 11. It likewise  
15 defines the “Order Form” as “the document specifying the Legal Research Service you ordered from us,  
16 the applicable charges, and any related terms and conditions.” *Id.* Here, ICE’s contract with RELX,  
17 under which ICE subscribed to the LexisNexis Legal Research Service, *see* Jones Decl. ¶ 4, is the  
18 “Order Form,” and thus ICE’s use of the Legal Research Service is subject to the Master Agreement.  
19 ~~Moreover, “[e]ach time the Offline Lexis Materials are accessed by a user at an ICE facility, the Master  
20 Agreement is displayed and the user must agree to the terms before proceeding.” O’Donnell Decl. ¶ 5.~~  
21 So even if ICE was not bound by the Master Agreement by virtue of its contract with RELX for use of  
22 the LexisNexis Legal Research Service (which it is), the evidence would remain uncontradicted that the  
23 Master Agreement applies as a result of the user’s assent to its terms at the time of use.

24 “Affidavits submitted by an agency to demonstrate the adequacy of its response are presumed to  
25 be in good faith.” *Hamdan v. U.S. Dep’t of Justice*, 797 F.3d 759, 770 (9th Cir. 2015). Plaintiff offers  
26 no evidence contradicting the O’Donnell Declaration, and its efforts to argue it out of existence are  
27 meritless. Indeed, Plaintiff succeeds only in confirming the Master Agreement’s clear application.  
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1 Plaintiff points to the Master Agreement's reference to LexisNexis being "a division of Reed Elsevier  
2 Properties, Inc.," but then immediately concedes that Reed Elsevier Properties, Inc. "became Relx, Inc."  
3 Opp'n at 11. This is true, and shows that the entity identified on the Master Agreement is the same as  
4 the one on the contract, and thus that the Master Agreement applies to the RELX-ICE relationship, just  
5 as stated in the O'Donnell Declaration and demonstrated above.

6 Plaintiff's other efforts to dispute the applicability of the Master Agreement are equally  
7 unavailing. Plaintiff points to the 2010 copyright date on the Master Agreement to suggest, erroneously,  
8 that it applies only to a "LexisNexis CD," and therefore cannot apply to the current materials provided  
9 by RELX under the contract signed in 2022. This ignores the plain language of the document. It is  
10 undisputed that the current version of the Offline Lexis Materials is provided to ICE on an electronic  
11 hard drive ("EHD"). Jones Decl. ¶ 6. By its terms, the Master Agreement applies to materials provided  
12 on EHD, as its definition of "Distributed Media" includes "external hard drive, or other physical media  
13 now existing or developed in the future on which we furnish the Legal Research Service." O'Donnell  
14 Decl., Ex. A at p.10. As explained above, the Master Agreement provides that ICE's use of the Legal  
15 Research Service "is subject to this Master Agreement," *id.* at p. 1, which, by its terms, covers the  
16 current materials furnished on EHD, and is not limited to an outdated CD version, as Plaintiff wrongly  
17 suggests.

18 Plaintiff also attempts to invoke inapposite government contracting law to claim that the  
19 Defendants should have produced testimony about "who bound the government to the Master  
20 Agreement, and . . . that person had authority to bind the government." *See* Opp'n at 12. Unlike the  
21 cases Plaintiff cites, this not a contract action where the government disputes its obligation to an alleged  
22 contractor, but a FOIA case in which the relevant government officials have submitted sworn and  
23 uncontradicted testimony that the Master Agreement applies, supplying the terms of use for the Offline  
24 Lexis Materials. As explained above, the Master Agreement applies both by virtue of ICE's entry into  
25 the current contract with RELX subscribing to those materials, as well as by each user's agreement at  
26 the time of use. Plaintiff offers no evidence to the contrary, nor any authority suggesting that specific  
27 testimony about the contracting official's authority is required in this context.

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1 Plaintiff also attempts to undermine the Master Agreement by complaining, oddly, that it was  
 2 provided “for the first time, with [Defendants’] summary judgment brief.” Opp’n at 4. This is not so  
 3 much a challenge to the Master Agreement’s applicability as an assertion that Plaintiff was somehow  
 4 unfairly surprised by it. In all events, the argument is meritless. Since this is a FOIA action, in which  
 5 discovery prior to summary judgment is not appropriate,<sup>2</sup> and in which discovery did not occur, this was  
 6 not just proper—as Defendants’ opposition and cross-motion for summary judgment was the first time  
 7 Defendants were required to provide evidence in support of their position—but to be expected.  
 8 Plaintiff’s suggestion that the Master Agreement should have been provided earlier, in response to an  
 9 email asking Defendants to voluntarily preview the evidence they would use in support of their defense,  
 10 lacks merit. Defendants had no obligation to do so (as Plaintiff concedes by identifying none), nor any  
 11 reason or ability to anticipate Plaintiff’s arguments on the merits before they were made. Regardless,  
 12 Plaintiff was not prejudiced in any way (and does not even suggest that it was).

13 In sum, Plaintiff’s evidence-free challenges to the Master Agreement fail to create a genuine  
 14 issue, much less overcome, ICE’s sworn testimony that it applies. As demonstrated further below, the  
 15 terms of the Master Agreement, coupled with the other undisputed evidence, are fatal to Plaintiff’s  
 16 arguments on the merits.

17 **C. The Offline Lexis Materials Are Not Agency Records**

18 **1. Plaintiff Fails to Distinguish Controlling Precedent Holding that Electronic  
 19 Library Materials Are Not Agency Records**

20 After failing to address the most relevant precedents from this Court and the Ninth Circuit in its  
 21 opening brief, Plaintiff’s belated attempt to distinguish them is unpersuasive. Plaintiff takes issue with  
 22 Defendants “compar[ing] the electronic law library materials with computer programs, specialty  
 23 databases, and program source code used by government employees for reference purposes,” all of  
 24 which Plaintiff acknowledges “courts have concluded are not records eligible for release under FOIA.”

25 <sup>2</sup> See *Broemer v. Fed. Bureau of Investigation*, No. CV 08-05515 MMM (RZx), 2010 WL  
 26 11474673, at \*2 (C.D. Cal. May 7, 2010) (“[T]he Ninth Circuit’s holding in *Lane v. Dep’t of Interior*,  
 27 523 F.3d 1128 (9th Cir. 2008)] establishes that discovery in FOIA cases prior to discovery is  
 28 inappropriate”).

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1 Opp'n at 1. Here, presumably, Plaintiff is referring to *SDC Development Corp. v. Mathews*, 542 F.2d  
2 1116 (9th Cir. 1976) and *Baizer v. U.S. Dep't of Air Force*, 887 F. Supp. 225 (N.D. Cal. 1995), which  
3 Defendants discussed at length in their cross-motion. *See* Defs.' X-MSJ, Dkt. No. 40 at 2, 10-11.  
4 Contrary to the Plaintiff's framing, however, this does not require a "comparison" of dissimilar items—  
5 these cases specifically involved "electronic library materials," including electronic law library  
6 materials, which is exactly what Plaintiff seeks here. As a result, they are directly on point and, in the  
7 case of *SDC Development*, binding. There is no reason that the "reference library" materials stored in a  
8 "computer data bank," which were the subject of the request in *SDC Development*, 542 F.2d at 1117,  
9 should be treated differently because they involved a medical library rather than a law library. Needless  
10 to say, they should not.

11 Plaintiff nonetheless claims that the Offline Lexis Materials at issue here are somehow "entirely  
12 different in kind"—even though from a factual standpoint they are fundamentally the same—because,  
13 according to Plaintiff, their disclosure "is critical for the public's understanding of ICE's decisions  
14 regarding the fulfillment of its constitutional obligation to detained immigrants, including what law  
15 library materials it views as 'adequate.'" Opp'n at 1. Plaintiff cites no authority for this "constitutional  
16 obligation" exception to the holding of *SDC Development*, which appears nowhere in that case or any of  
17 the decisions applying it. Indeed, the plaintiff in *SDC Development* advanced a similar argument based  
18 on *Soucie v. David*, 448 F.2d 1067 (D.C. Cir. 1971)—that "any time an agency prepares a document 'in  
19 fulfillment of its function,' it becomes an agency record"—which the Ninth Circuit expressly rejected.  
20 542 F.2d at 1121 (distinguishing *Soucie* because it involved a request for a report that was "the  
21 deliberative product of the agency" and explaining that "the *Soucie* court did not address the question of  
22 agency materials which are primarily of library reference nature").

23 Plaintiff's strained attempt to distinguish *SDC Development* and *Baizer* confirms just how  
24 identical those cases are to this one. Although Plaintiff boldly proclaims that "[t]he materials requested  
25 here are entirely different in form and purpose," Opp'n at 8, Plaintiff fails to identify any meaningful  
26 distinction. With respect to *SDC Development*, Plaintiff merely notes that the records were part of a  
27 medical library "established and updated by the National Library of Medicine," and "readily

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1 disseminated for a Congressionally authorized fee.” Opp’n at 8-9. Plaintiff offers no explanation of  
 2 why this makes them different than the Offline Lexis Materials. In *SDC Development*, the agency  
 3 decided what materials to include in the library, *see* 542 F.2d at 1117 (noting that “[t]he functions of the  
 4 library are to acquire and preserve medical publications”), yet this did not affect the court’s conclusion  
 5 that “[t]he library material does not directly reflect the structure, operation, or decision-making functions  
 6 of the agency,” and thus was not an agency record. *Id.* at 1120. There, as here, the agency was “seeking  
 7 to protect not its information, but rather its system for delivering that information.” *Id.*

8 Plaintiff’s contention that the materials requested in *Baizer* “are entirely different” is likewise  
 9 incorrect. Just like this case, *Baizer* involved a request for “an electronic copy of” a “computerized legal  
 10 information database” possessed by an agency. 887 F. Supp. at 226. In rejecting the request on the  
 11 grounds that the database was not an agency record, the court observed that Baizer was “not the first to  
 12 attempt to use the FOIA to force a federal agency to release a computer research database.” *Id.* at 227.  
 13 That was the plaintiff in *SDC Development*, which lost in a decision affirmed by the Ninth Circuit,  
 14 which remains good law today. Here, as in *Baizer*, the information sought “is maintained for reference  
 15 purposes only,” and is “readily available both in public libraries and from other computerized reference  
 16 services such as Lexis and Westlaw.” *Id.* Indeed, in this case, the subject of the request is the very  
 17 information ICE licenses from LexisNexis on a non-exclusive basis. This was held not to be an agency  
 18 record in *SDC Development* or in *Baizer*, and that holding applies here as well.

19 Confronted with the indistinguishable facts of *SDC Development* and *Baizer*, Plaintiff attempts  
 20 to conjure an exception unsupported by the reasoning of either case, by insisting that the computer  
 21 research database should be deemed an agency record here because it is used “to meet a constitutional  
 22 obligation.” Opp’n at 9. The cases, however, say nothing about control—which is the key determinant  
 23 of agency record status—hinging on whether the agency possesses the information to fulfill a  
 24 “constitutional obligation.” As noted above, *SDC Development* rejected a virtually identical argument.  
 25 542 F.2d at 1121. Nor is there any basis for assuming, as Plaintiff appears to, that the Air Force in  
 26 *Baizer*, for example, did not possess the requested information to assist with its fulfillment of some  
 27 constitutional or other important legal duty of the agency. Indeed, it is difficult to conceive of a reason  
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1 why an agency would maintain such materials that was unrelated to the fulfillment of some important  
2 duty it was obligated to perform. Regardless, for purposes of determining whether information  
3 constitutes an agency record, the case law instructs that “[i]f an agency integrates material into its files  
4 and relies on it in decision making, then the agency controls the material. If, on the other hand, material  
5 is maintained solely for reference purposes or as a research tool, then the indicia of control are lacking.”  
6 *Baizer*, 887 F. Supp. at 228. Plaintiff cannot credibly contend that, as a factual matter, the Offline Lexis  
7 Materials are not used “for reference purpose or as a research tool.” That is exactly what they are used  
8 for, just as it was in *SDC Development* and *Baizer*. Even assuming Plaintiff is correct that the Offline  
9 Lexis Materials are provided to aid in the protection of constitutional rights, it remains indisputably true  
10 that the way they perform that function is by serving as a reference tool. Accordingly, the Offline Lexis  
11 Materials are not agency records.

12 **2. The Control Factors Unanimously Indicate that ICE Does Not Control the**  
13 **Offline Lexis Materials**

14 Unable to distinguish these precedents or cite a single case holding that a computer research  
15 database was an agency record, Plaintiff instead attempts to twist the undisputed facts (which show  
16 unequivocally that RELX, not ICE, maintains control over the Offline Lexis Materials) in support of its  
17 position. *See* Opp’n at 10-14. This effort, too, lacks merit.

18 In evaluating control under the “totality of the circumstances,” courts sometimes consider “(1)  
19 the intent of the document’s creator to retain or relinquish control over the records; (2) the ability of the  
20 agency to use and dispose of the record as it sees fit; (3) the extent to which agency personnel have read  
21 or relied upon the document; and (4) the degree to which the document was integrated into the agency’s  
22 record system or files.” *Cause of Action Inst. v. Off. of Mgmt. & Budget*, 10 F.4th 849, 855 (D.C. Cir.  
23 2021). As Defendants explained in their opening brief, the Ninth Circuit declined to “fully embrace” the  
24 D.C. Circuit’s test, discounting the importance of the first and fourth factors. *Rojas v. Fed. Aviation*  
25 *Admin.*, 941 F.3d 392, 409 (9th Cir. 2019). Plaintiff contends the Court should ignore *Rojas*’s guidance  
26 regarding the control analysis because that case involved an issue of whether records were personal or  
27 related to agency business, while this one does not. Opp’n at 8 n.6. Defendants do not read *Rojas* so

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1 narrowly, but the point is immaterial. Indeed, Defendants would welcome the Court giving full weight  
 2 to all four factors in the D.C. Circuit's test, because they weigh uniformly in Defendants' favor.

3 As to the first factor, Plaintiff confusingly argues that "the agency intended to and retains control  
 4 over the electronic law library." Opp'n at 10. But the first factor looks to "the intent of the document's  
 5 creator," *Cause of Action*, 10 F.4th at 855, not its recipient, and there is no question that RELX, not ICE,  
 6 created the Offline Lexis Materials, which it licensed to ICE. The Master Agreement makes clear  
 7 RELX's intent to retain control over the Offline Lexis Materials by providing them only under a limited  
 8 license subject to a host of restrictions. O'Donnell Decl., Ex. A. Plaintiff offers no evidence at all with  
 9 respect to RELX's intent, much less any that contradicts the provisions of the Master Agreement.  
 10 Moreover, in addition to focusing erroneously on ICE's intent (which, in any event, was the same as  
 11 RELX's), Plaintiff's effort to spin the facts as showing that ICE intended to somehow "retain" control  
 12 over information it did not create, is baseless.

13 Citing provisions of the contract that specify what services RELX must provide, Plaintiff  
 14 wrongly claims that these evince ICE's control. *See* Opp'n at 10 (arguing that "ICE's contract and  
 15 accompanying Statement of Work with Relx also lay out in painstaking detail the specific requirements,  
 16 format, audience, screen display, content, research features, functionality, and form of the electronic  
 17 library"). That the government, as part of the contracting process, told the contractor what services to  
 18 provide says nothing about which party controls the actual provision of the service. The evidence,  
 19 which is detailed extensively in Defendants' motion, shows unequivocally that control of the Offline  
 20 Lexis Materials rests with RELX, not ICE. *See* Jones Decl. ¶ 8 ("Responsibility for programming and  
 21 maintaining the Offline Lexis Materials, rests with the contractor, RELX, not the agency."); *see also*  
 22 Defs.' Mot. at 4-7. Indeed, the contract itself expressly provides that "the Service Provider [RELX], and  
 23 not the Government, is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the electronic law library and all the  
 24 management and quality control actions required to meet the terms of the Agreement." Jones Decl., Ex.  
 25 B at p. 65. Plaintiff offers no evidence to the contrary. And Plaintiff's effort to distort the contract  
 26 provisions authorizing performance oversight by ICE for quality assurance purposes likewise do not  
 27 show that ICE controls the provision of the service, but the opposite. In fact, the contract obligates  
 28

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1 RELX to “develop, implement, and maintain” the Quality Control Plan setting forth the methods RELX  
 2 uses to review its own performance, and to submit these Quality Control reports to ICE on a monthly  
 3 basis. *Id.* at pp. 65-66.

4 Plaintiff also misleadingly presents a snippet from ICE’s Performance-Based National Detention  
 5 Standards, which innocuously states that “facilities must make available in the law library any electronic  
 6 media provided by ICE/ERO, containing the required publications or other supporting legal research  
 7 platforms for detainees. This may include . . . External Hard Drives developed by legal research service  
 8 vendors utilized by ICE.” Opp’n at 10 (citing ICE, Performance-Based National Detention Standards  
 9 2011 § 6.3, at 423). Plaintiff emphasizes the words “provided by” in the first sentence to suggest that  
 10 ICE has a “direct and controlling role in the design and provision of the electronic law library.” *Id.* The  
 11 cited document (which is not in evidence), however, says no such thing. Rather, it is obviously referring  
 12 to the Offline Lexis Materials provided to ICE by RELX, which (as the document states) are made  
 13 available in the law libraries “for detainees.” As discussed above, the evidence demonstrates that those  
 14 materials are controlled by RELX, not ICE.

15 As to the second factor, the agency’s ability to use and dispose of the records as it sees fit, the  
 16 Master Agreement extensively restricts ICE from doing so. *See* O’Donnell Decl., Ex. A at pp. 2-3.  
 17 Plaintiff’s argument to the contrary consists entirely of its unsupported claim that the Master Agreement  
 18 does not apply, which is wrong for the reasons explained above.<sup>3</sup>

19 On the third factor, the extent to which agency personnel have read or relied on the document,  
 20 Plaintiff takes another of the performance oversight contract provisions out of context to claim that “the  
 21 contract makes clear that ICE employees regularly read the contents of the electronic law library.”  
 22 Opp’n at 13. What this provision actually says, however, is that, to assure “Vendor Performance,” the  
 23 Contracting Officer’s Representative (i.e., a single ICE employee) “will review the electronic law library

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 25       <sup>3</sup> Similarly, Plaintiff’s attempt to distinguish *Tax Analysts II* and *Gilmore v. U.S. Dep’t of Energy*, 4 F. Supp. 2d 912 (N.D. Cal. 1998)—both of which rejected FOIA requests seeking information the government licensed from a third party because it was not an agency record, *see* Defs.’ X-MSJ at 12-13, fails because it rests entirely on Plaintiff’s unsupported and erroneous assertion that the Master Agreement does not apply.  
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1 to ensure that all the requirements and performance standards listed in the SOW are fulfilled.” Jones  
 2 Decl., Ex. B at p.66. This provision supplies no evidence that any ICE personnel use the Offline Lexis  
 3 Materials for any purpose beyond making sure RELX adequately performs the contract. The record  
 4 remains undisputed that, as the agency has stated, “[t]he Offline Lexis Materials are maintained for the  
 5 use of detained noncitizens in ICE custody,” and “ICE personnel do not use the Offline Lexis Materials  
 6 to conduct any agency research or decision-making.” Jones Decl. ¶ 7.

7 Finally, on the fourth factor, the degree to which the document was integrated into the agency’s  
 8 record system or files, Plaintiff again distorts the record, arguing that because ICE uploads the contents  
 9 of the EHDs supplied by RELX to law library computers, this somehow “integrates” the Offline Lexis  
 10 Materials into ICE’s “record system and files.” Opp’n at 14. It does not. The contract makes clear that  
 11 the Offline Lexis Materials provided by RELX are a “Self-Contained Legal Research System” furnished  
 12 on a standalone EHD. Jones Decl., Ex. A at p. 9. RELX prepares these EHDs and ships them to ICE,  
 13 which uploads the contents to computers in detention facilities that are not connected to the internet, and  
 14 then ships the EHDs back to RELX. Jones Decl. ¶¶ 6, 9. The process is repeated quarterly for updates,  
 15 with RELX providing technical support for any installation or troubleshooting issues. *Id.* ¶ 9. Contrary  
 16 to Plaintiff’s unsupported characterization, no “integration” occurs. Of course, the database materials on  
 17 the EHD need to be loaded onto a computer, or they would be of no use to anyone. But that act alone  
 18 hardly constitutes “integration.” *See Cause of Action Inst.*, 10 F.4th at 859 (concluding that internet  
 19 browsing histories “were not integrated into the agency’s systems or records,” despite “resid[ing] on the  
 20 agencies’ systems,” because “an agency does not necessarily ‘control’ every document found in its  
 21 digital storage”).

22 Simply stated, all the relevant control factors, and thus the “totality of the circumstances,”  
 23 indicate that the Offline Lexis Materials are not an agency record subject to FOIA.

24 **D. Exemption 4 Protects the Offline Lexis Materials from Disclosure**

25 Plaintiff’s challenge to Defendants’ invocation of Exemption 4 is equally without merit. On this  
 26 point, Plaintiff’s opposition is premised on its flawed and unsupported effort to equate detained  
 27 noncitizens in ICE custody with “the public.” Plaintiff claims that providing the materials to detained  
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1 noncitizens subject to the restrictions imposed by the Master Agreement is the same as providing them  
 2 freely to members of the general public with no restrictions of any kind. The evidence, however,  
 3 remains uncontradicted that ICE provides access only to detained noncitizens, and not to members of the  
 4 general public. Jones Decl. ¶¶ 8, 10-11. ~~Plaintiff's false equivalence between "the public" and~~  
 5 ~~individuals in ICE custody ignores this evidence, as well as the evidence that the detained noncitizens~~  
 6 ~~themselves must agree to the Master Agreement before using the Offline Lexis Materials. O'Donnell~~  
 7 ~~Decl. ¶ 5.~~ Detained noncitizens—like government employees—are not considered members of “the  
 8 public” for these purposes, but are instead the only people with access to the detention facility law  
 9 libraries, for whose benefit ICE obtains the Offline Lexis Materials from RELX. Just as an agency  
 10 giving access to information to government employees to enable the performance of their job  
 11 functions—even though in some contexts those employees would also be considered members of “the  
 12 public” generally—is not a public disclosure, nor is provision of the Offline Lexis Materials to detained  
 13 noncitizens for legal research purposes while in custody such a public disclosure. Under Plaintiff’s  
 14 conception of “the public,” an agency that licensed information from a contractor could not show it to  
 15 anyone without losing the protection of its license, and thus confidentiality for purposes of Exemption 4.  
 16 Unsurprisingly, this position stands bereft of authority.

17 Exemption 4 is “the only appropriate approach for protecting copyrighted documents under  
 18 FOIA.” *Hooker v. Dep’t of Health & Human Servs.*, 887 F. Supp. 2d 40, 61 n.18 (D.D.C. 2012), *aff’d*,  
 19 No. 13-5280, 2014 WL 3014213 (D.C. Cir. May 13, 2014). Plaintiff does not dispute this point of law  
 20 or provide any authority holding otherwise. Nor does Plaintiff expressly argue that protecting  
 21 copyrighted information by providing it to the government under a limited license is inadequate to  
 22 maintain confidentiality—though that is the clear upshot of Plaintiff’s position, which is legally  
 23 untenable. “There is no reason . . . that a party should be able to use FOIA as an end run around the  
 24 protections afforded by copyright to access information it would otherwise have to pay for, nor should  
 25 the Act be read to place agencies in the position of having to disclose information that could later lead to  
 26 infringement suits.” *Naumes v. Dep’t of the Army*, 588 F. Supp. 3d 23, 40 (D.D.C. 2022). That is

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1 precisely what Plaintiff seeks to do here—obtain access for free to information it would otherwise have  
 2 to pay for—and the Court should accordingly reject the attempt as improper.

3 In *Naumes*, which involved a request for survey questions that came from copyrighted sources,  
 4 the court rejected the plaintiff’s argument “that to establish confidentiality, Defendant must show ‘that  
 5 the millions of people who regularly take the [survey at issue], voluntarily or involuntarily, are bound by  
 6 any confidentiality agreement or secure test procedures.’” 588 F. Supp. 3d at 41. There, the court  
 7 ordered the defendant to “contact the copyright holders . . . and inform the Court as to their position on  
 8 the release of questions from their copyrighted materials,” *id.*, before ultimately granting summary  
 9 judgment in favor of the defendant, *see Naumes v. Dep’t of the Army*, No. 21-1670 (JEB), 2022 WL  
 10 17752206, at \*6 (D.D.C. Dec. 19, 2022). Here, that information is already before the Court in the form  
 11 of the Master Agreement between the agency and the copyright holder, RELX. And the Master  
 12 Agreement could not be clearer in prohibiting disclosure to the public. Among other things, under  
 13 “Prohibited Uses,” the Master Agreement provides:

14 You may not, nor may you permit others to:

15 1.4.1 use the Legal Research Service in any fashion that may infringe any copyright,  
 16 intellectual property right, or proprietary or property right or interest of us or our  
 Suppliers; or

17 1.4.2 store in a retrieval system, transfer, publish, distribute, display to others,  
 18 broadcast, sell, or sublicense all of any portion of the Legal Research Service, except as  
 expressly provided in Section 1.2; or

19 [. . .]

20 1.4.4 make any portion of the Legal Research Service available to third parties through  
 21 any timesharing system, service bureau, the Internet, or any other similar technology now  
 existing or developed in the future.

22 O’Donnell Decl., Ex. A at p.3.

23 Plaintiff also argues that confidentiality cannot attach because RELX does not impose “internal  
 24 access controls” or a “non-disclosure agreement regarding the electronic library’s contents.” Opp’n at  
 25 16. In the context of copyrighted materials, such extreme secrecy measures are not necessary to  
 26 establish that the information is “at least closely held” to qualify for the protection of Exemption 4. The  
 27 court in *Naumes* rejected a similar argument (even in the absence of a license agreement between the  
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1 agency and the copyright holder), noting that the “materials were already copyrighted at the time the  
2 Army received them . . . , so adding an additional layer of protection would not necessarily have been  
3 needed.” 588 F. Supp. 3d at 41. Plaintiff’s reliance on *Animal Legal Defense Fund v. U.S. Food &*  
4 *Drug Admin.*, Case No. 12-cv-04376-KAW, 2021 WL 3270666 (N.D. Cal. July 30, 2011) is misplaced.  
5 There, the Court found that Exemption 4 did not apply because there was “no evidence in the record as  
6 to the specific steps taken” by the information’s owner to maintain confidentiality. *Id.* at \*5. Here, in  
7 contrast, the steps taken by RELX are set forth in the Master Agreement. Moreover, *ALDF* does not  
8 suggest, as Plaintiff argues, that non-disclosure agreements are necessarily required for protecting  
9 confidentiality, particularly in the context of copyrighted information, which was not at issue in that  
10 case. *ALDF* only discussed the use of non-disclosure agreements because the defendants offered  
11 evidence that the information at issue had been subject to such an agreement as part of a corporate  
12 acquisition. The court deemed that inadequate because it did not show that any such confidentiality-  
13 maintaining steps were taken prior to the acquisition, which was the relevant time period. *Id.*

14 Plaintiff’s argument that the Master Agreement does not constitute an assurance from ICE to  
15 RELX that it will maintain the information closely held is likewise unsupported. To the extent such  
16 assurances are required, express written assurances as clear as the use restrictions and prohibitions set  
17 forth in the Master Agreement are more than adequate. Courts have accepted far less formal assurances  
18 as sufficient. *See Am. Small Bus. League v. U.S. Dep’t of Def.*, 411 F. Supp. 3d 824, 834 (N.D. Cal.  
19 2019) (holding that “written documentation or express assurances by the government” are not required  
20 and “[a]n implied assurance suffices”); *Am. Civil Liberties Union v. Fed. Bureau of Prisons*, No. CV 20-  
21 2320 (RBW), 2022 WL 17250300, at \*8 (D.D.C. Nov. 28, 2022) (finding a declaration stating that the  
22 government “agreed to abide” by confidentiality requests from information submitters “during in-person  
23 meetings and/or telephone conference calls” sufficient evidence of assurance). Plaintiff’s only  
24 counterargument is to point out that the Master Agreement contemplates the possibility of the  
25 LexisNexis Legal Research Service being made available in a public library setting. Opp’n at 17. Here,  
26 again, Plaintiff ignores that disclosure pursuant to the Master Agreement, even in a public library, would  
27 occur subject to the recipient’s acceptance of the limited license and agreement to abide by extensive  
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1 restrictions. O'Donnell Decl., Ex. A at p. 4 (requiring that a library user "require patrons who wish to  
2 use the Legal Research Service to agree to abide by the terms of the notice set forth [in] Section 1.5.5.  
3 before their use of the Legal Research Service"). Plaintiff's argument also conflates the provision of  
4 limited use-based access in a library setting with free disclosure of the complete electronic law library in  
5 its native format as sought by Plaintiff's request, which there is no evidence RELX provides to anyone.  
6 Accordingly, Plaintiff's challenges to Defendants' withholding of the Offline Lexis Materials under  
7 Exemption 4 lack merit and the Court should uphold the exemption.<sup>4</sup>

**E. Plaintiff's Factually Unsupported Waiver Argument Fails Because ICE Discloses the Offline Lexis Materials Only to Authorized Users with "Strings Attached"**

Plaintiff’s waiver argument is simply a repackaged version of its unsupported arguments, discussed above, that (a) the provision of information pursuant to a limited license is ineffective to protect confidentiality for purposes of Exemption 4; and (b) providing the information to any detained noncitizen in ICE custody, even under a limited license, amounts to free and unfettered disclosure to the general public. Controlling precedent makes clear, however, that a waiver only occurs when the government discloses “confidential information to the public” “without any limits on further dissemination.” *Watkins v. U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Prot.*, 643 F.3d 1189, 1197 (9th Cir. 2011). This case presents the opposite situation from *Watkins*, where the government made a “no-strings-attached disclosure” of the requested information “without limiting the third-party’s ability to further disseminate the information,” *id.* at 1197-98, whereas here, disclosure occurs only subject to the Master Agreement, which expressly limits further dissemination. Consequently, no waiver has occurred.

### III. CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Plaintiff's motion for summary judgment should be denied and Defendants' cross-motion granted.

<sup>4</sup> Plaintiff does not contest Defendants’ showing that their interests would be foreseeably harmed by disclosure, and thus that the requirements of the FOIA Improvement Act of 2016 are satisfied here. *See* Defs.’ X-MSJ at 21.

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1 DATED: March 26August 6, 2024

Respectfully submitted,

2 ISMAIL J. RAMSEY  
3 United States Attorney

4 /s/ David M. DeVito  
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